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In the specification:

On page 1, line 5, please insert the following paragraph:

a¹
This application claims priority of U.S. Serial No. 08/592,070, filed January 26, 1996 and of U.S. Serial No. 08/948,131, filed October 9, 1997 under 35 U.S.C. §120, the contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference into the present application.

In the claims:

~~Please cancel claims 27, 28 and 29 and introduce new claims 41-58 as follows:~~

41. (New) A method of inhibiting of the binding of a β -sheet fibril to RAGE on the surface of a cell of a subject, wherein the cell is located outside the central nervous system of the subject, which comprises contacting the cell with a compound that inhibits binding of the β -sheet fibril to RAGE.

a²
42. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the β -sheet fibril is amyloid fibril.

43. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the β -sheet fibril is a prion- derived fibril.